

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 KUWAIT 004629

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KU KDMR

SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION, OCTOBER 4-7: WMD IN IRAQ;
ISRAEL'S ATTACK AGAINST SYRIA; U.S. TREASURY VISIT TO
KUWAIT; BREMER'S CALL TO WRITE OFF COMPENSATION CLAIMS TO
KUWAIT; THE VISIT OF KUWAIT'S PM TO WASHINGTON; MUSLIMS IN
THE U.S.

11. News Stories:

Al-Rai Al-Aam reports on (10/7) that Prime Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed, reassured the families of the Kuwaiti Guantanamo detainees that he spoke to USG officials about this issue and that they were "understanding."

All newspapers reported (10/7) that Kuwait urged the UNSC to condemn the attack by Israel on Syrian territories and requested that no such aggression be repeated. Prime Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed, condemned (10/6) the Israeli attack on Syria: "The raid constitutes a clear Israeli aggression against the sanctity of the territories of the Arab Republic of Syria and a breach of UNSC resolutions and international legitimacy." "Such grave military escalation could cause the failure of the peace process, would undermine efforts aimed at its success, and threaten stability and security in the Middle East region."

All newspapers reported (10/7) that Chairman of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, Masoud Barazani, visited Kuwait yesterday. When asked about the compensation claims he said: "The compensations are a simple matter and we can reach an understanding in this regard." Remaining three dailies quoted Barazani as saying the compensations "are not important" instead of "simple." Barazani also stressed that the Iraqi people are not responsible for the crimes of the ousted regime.

Al-Rai Al-Am reported on (10/6) that the Head of the Iraqi Governing Council, Ahmad Chalabi, said Iraq was committed to paying compensations to Kuwait as per UNSCR 1483. Chalabi said that Amb. Bremer had not approached him about foregoing the compensation rights for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

All newspapers(10/5): Salafi movement reelects Hakem Al-Mutairi as Secretary General for a second three year term.

All newspapers reported on (10/7) that Boeing Co. announced that Kuwait signed an initial foreign military sales (FMS) contract with the U.S. Department of Defense to purchase 16 AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters.

All newspapers reported on (10/7) that two Kuwaiti mobile telecom companies were licensed to build and operate mobile telephone networks in southern and northern Iraq.

On (10/5) all newspapers reported that Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, Faisal Al-Hajji, met with a delegation from the U.S. Department of the Treasury whereby he stressed that Kuwait is keen on supporting charity work inside and outside of Kuwait, but is against any act of terrorism.

All newspapers reported (10/7) that the Ministry of Social Affairs also received a World Bank delegation that asked questions about means of preventing money laundering using charitable donations and measures taken to prevent terrorism financing. Al-Qabas: Informed sources revealed that Kuwait's five main charity organizations have 124 committee branches whose financial transactions are not directly monitored like the parent organizations and who deal with millions of Dinars in Charity donations, which sometimes exceeds the donations handled by the parent organization.

Minister of Energy, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahd, announced that Kuwait is considering a request from the Iraqi Governing Council to provide Southern Iraq with Electricity. All newspapers reported (10/5) that the director of external relations at the U.S. branch of the Student Union called on Kuwaiti students studying in the U.S. who are currently in Kuwait to register at Kuwait University in light of delays by the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait in granting them visas.

(10/7) Al-Qabas carried a statement by Consul Sean Murphy clarifying that between Jan 1 and Aug 31, 2003 the Embassy issued 567 student visas compared to 462 student visas during the same period of 2002, for an increase of about 24%. The 567 student visas issued represents approximately 97% of all students visa applications received during the period. He added that approximately two-thirds of all visas (not just student visas) approved by the Embassy are issued the same day.

Al-Rai Al-Aam reported (10/7): An official source at the Ministry of Interior revealed that some American soldiers are smuggling alcohol from Iraq into Kuwait.

Al-Anba reported (10/7): An informed security source revealed that a Saudi man suspected of being a member of Al-Qaeda was apprehended a week ago at the Kuwaiti border with Iraq and referred to State Security for investigation. According to the sources, the man was being chased by Iraqi security when he crossed the border into Kuwait.

Al-Seyassa (10/6): Kuwait's Interior Minister, Sheikh Nawaf al Sabah, denied reports that security officials sabotaged an attempt to smuggle \$60 million worth of chemical weapons and biological warheads from Iraq.

All newspapers (10/6): A Saudi man was arrested at the Kuwait-Iraq Abdali border for attempting to smuggle more than 4876 bottles of liquor into Kuwait. An American and South African drivers were also apprehended for attempting to smuggle ten cartons of whiskey into Kuwait.

Al Watan (10/5): An Indian Driver was shot and killed by a Kuwaiti guard outside of Camp Arifjan. The driver was delivering meals from a local restaurant. He failed to stop at the Kuwaiti checkpoint and did not heed the two warning shots fired by the Kuwaiti Guard.

On October 5, Al-Watan newspaper published a paid advertisement by The Kuwaiti Union for Women Associations regarding Paul Bremer's call to write off Kuwait and Saudi Arabia's debts to Iraq. They called on the National Assembly to respond to Bremer's call and expressed their fear that such a demand would become an excuse to look into other UN resolutions especially UN Resolution 833 on the demarcation of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti boarders.

Editorials:

12. "Demeaning and Bankrupt Policy"

Islamist Dr. Yaser Al-Saleh wrote in independent Al-Rai Al-Aam (10/07): "We know where Iraq's WMD are". David Kays' team reported no WMD found or proof that Iraq possessed such weapons.... Despite this scandal, the Bush and Blair Administrations are still busy using the same scenario with other countries in the region such as Iran. The two Administrations should have dealt more seriously and more respectfully towards the people of this region instead of insisting on using the same lie and deception used in the case of Iraq.... This signifies a preplanned Zionist agenda to be implemented in the region. The Zionist mind, however, is incapable of creating an alternate introductory scenario following the unexpected beating in Iraq."

13. "Terrorism to Exit the Crisis"

Liberal Editor-in-chief of Al-Anba, Bibi Al-Marzook, opined (10/7): "The aggression against Syria has revealed Israel's ugly face. This act reflects an arrogant, sly, and shameless challenge by Prime Minister Sharon. This aggression proved that Israel is not determined to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.... The U.S. must not turn a blind eye on Israel's aggression. The UN should not only issue condemnation statements. Annan must also call on the international community to pressure Sharon's government to put an end to hostile actions and to return to the negotiating table before terrorism spreads in the whole region."

14. "Hostile Operations"

Liberal Dr. Ayed Al-Mana' wrote in independent Al-Watan (10/6): "The Oct. 4 Haifa suicide attack did not result in any positive response except in the Arab and Islamic worlds. To Europeans and Americans, suicide attacks aimed at civilians are criminal acts that must be condemned and punished. These attacks will make it easier for the Zionist government to punish thousands of Palestinians under the pretext of punishing resistance organizations accused of terrorism. There is no doubt that the Palestinians have the right to resist the occupation, and the Intifada is an effective tool. Many of us have hoped, however, that the Intifada would retain its peaceful and civil character. Armed resistance is a legitimate right to harass and harm the enemy, but the Haifa suicide attack is politically more damaging to the Palestinian cause and antagonizes moderate Jews and the West who have a great influence in the peace process."

15. "On the Fourth Anniversary of the Intifada"
Khudair Al-Anzi wrote in independent Al-Qabas (10/4): "The truth that emerged following September 11 is that the U.S. is led by an Administration that is not concerned about the interests of the American people as much as it cares for implementing the Zionist project in the region. Standing up to such a policy following the fall of Saddam is a legitimate and patriotic duty. It is crucial not to normalize relations with Israel and to reject all orders to put a stop to legitimate resistance."

16. "The US Treasury Delegation"
Former MP, conservative Shiite Dr. Abdelmohsen Jamal wrote in independent Al-Qabas (10/6): "The visits of the US Treasury delegation to monitor means of financing terrorism as they claim has increased lately. I cannot understand how the [Kuwaiti] government could allow a foreign entity to monitor its work or activities despite the fact that our Constitution clearly states that we are an independent and sovereign country. No foreign entity has the right to monitor or inspect the government's activities. Moreover, there is no law in Kuwait that allows Americans to intervene in Kuwait's internal affairs. If the Americans want to measure Kuwait's commitment to international resolutions regarding charitable work, they must refer to the UN"

17. "Charitable Work and the US Treasury Delegation"
Moderate Islamist, Faisal Al-Zamel, wrote in independent Al-Anba (10/7): "The visit of the US Treasury delegation to Kuwait and to the region has led to creating a better understanding of ways to maintain voluntary and charitable work. When asked about Kuwait, the head of the delegation responded 'we have no negative remarks about Kuwait'. This, however, does not relieve charity organizations of the responsibility of exerting effort to preserve the their activities from misuse of funds."

18. "Bremer's Statement"
Liberal Iqbal Al-Ahamd wrote in independent Al-Qabas (10/4): "In light of the distinguished relations between Kuwait and the U.S., Ambassador Bremer's calls to write off Kuwait's compensations to belittle the Kuwaiti government and its people. His remarks can only be described as an attempt to instigate sedition among friends because such a request will only cause a crisis between the two governments, especially in light of the fact that the Kuwaiti government cannot ignore the reaction of the Kuwaiti street."

19. "To Bremer with Regards"
Liberal Talal Al-Arab wrote in independent Al-Qabas (10/4): "Bremer has asked Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to write off their debts to Iraq. This is not acceptable at all, because Kuwait's demands for compensations are legitimate and have been approved by the UN. Moreover, it is not Bremer's right to interfere in Kuwait's affairs.... We fear that Bremer may one day ask Kuwait to redraw its borders with Iraq and bring the region back to square one."

10. "The Historic Mission"
Faisal Al-Barjes wrote in independent Al-Qabas (10/7): "The visit of Shaikh Sabah Al-Ahamd to Washington and Britain and his meetings with Bush and Blair to discuss regional and international issues and to convey the views of Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Syria is considered a historic mission for Kuwait. We congratulate ourselves as Kuwaiti citizens for the success of Shaikh Sabah's visit, especially at this critical time."

11. "Washington and the Distorted Image"
Moderate Islamist Faisal Al-Zamel wrote in independent Al-Anba (10/6): "In its war against terrorism, Washington no longer seems capable of differentiating between friends and enemies. In its eyes, everyone is a suspect. Last week, American authorities apprehended the Chairman of the U.S. American Islamic Council, Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Amoudi. Al-Amoudi was a guest at the White House on several occasions. The September 11 attacks have generated a society that is unwilling to listen to other people's opinion. We hope that Washington will become aware of this deterioration and begin to ask itself why people hate Americans and what has to be done to change America's image."